



NOTES FOR FURTHER STUDY

Supplemental Texts

Ex. 32:6; Lev. 11:13-15; Num. 27:8-11; 36:7-9; Due. 14:11-14; 21:15-17; 2 Sa. 11:11; 1 Kings 3:13; 10:4-7; 1 Chro. 29:25; Job 20:20; 27:8; 31:24; 38:41; Pss. 39:4-6; 49:10; 62:10; 147; Ecc. 2:1-11, 16, 24-25; 3:13; 5:18; 8:15; 7:2-4; 11:8; Isa. 22:12-13; Jer. 17:11; Matt. 3:2; 6:7-8, 19-33; 11:28-30; 14:27; 19:16-30; 25:34; Mark 1:14-15; 4:41; 8:34-35; Luke 3:22; 5:11, 28; 6:36; 9:21-27, 35; 11:20, 40-41, 46; 12:4-7; 16:13; 17:21; 18:28-30; Acts 2:45; 2 Cor. 8:9; Col. 1:13-14; 1 Tim. 6:17-19; James 1:17; 5:1-6

Study Summary

When Jesus' teaching is interrupted by a man from the crowd asking for Jesus to intervene in a dispute he was having with his brother over inheritance, Jesus launches into a long discussion on the dangers of greed and worry and how we are called to live not for this life, but for the life to come.

Historical & Theological Background

Inheritance: "One of Jesus' hearers was having trouble with his brother about the proper division of an inheritance. Jewish laws of succession covered most cases (cf. Deut. 21:17), but there was sometimes room for doubt and in this case the man who spoke up felt that an injustice was being done. His brother was clearly in possession and he wanted Jesus to persuade him to disgorge. He does not ask Jesus to decide on the merits of two claims: he asks for a decision in his own favour. He seems to be acting unilaterally for nothing indicates that the brother had agreed to have Jesus try the case. The man is taking Jesus as a typical rabbi, for the rabbis customarily gave decisions on disputed points of law. Jesus, however, refused to have anything to do with it. His form of address, *Man*, is far from cordial (cf. Bengel, 'He addresses him as a stranger'). He came to bring people to God, not to bring property to people. In this situation he was concerned with the attitudes of those involved, not with who got what."

Ravens: These birds are not simply small and seemingly insignificant creatures, they are considered unclean and unfit for consumption in OT Law (Lev. 11:13-15). Jesus showcases God's care for these unclean birds to contrast how much He cares for His beloved children and, therefore, why we have no need to worry.

Kingdom of God: Jesus spent much of His earthly ministry preaching, and His main topic was the Kingdom of God. God's Kingdom is the acknowledgement and assertion of His power and authority. It is creation as it is meant to be: surrendered to the Creator. While many of the Israelites were looking forward to the establishment of an earthly king through which God would assert His power over the nations, Jesus revealed that the Kingdom is "God's rule in action," a whole new sphere created by God's salvific work in the lives of men and women. Jesus taught that in Him the Kingdom has come, seen in "the authority with which He combated evil." His acts of healing were not "interruptions of causal connections within natural law, but" "manifestations of the Kingdom of God." In His preaching and miracles, Jesus was restoring creation, setting things right, loosing the bonds of Satan, and pointing forward to His final victory on the cross, which will be consummated when He returns to establish His Kingdom in its fullness. In this sense there is a present and future reality to the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom is present in the continued activities of the Savior and His people throughout the world in and by the Spirit. Yet, there remains a final establishment of God's Kingdom in the future when Christ returns to make all things new and unite heaven and earth.

DISCUSSION PRIMER

Take some time this week to read Luke 12:13-34 slowly and prayerfully. Ask yourself these questions: How might greed be manifested in your life? What do you worry about? What would it look like to give these worries to God?

TEXTUAL INVESTIGATION

LUKE 12:13-34

Big Idea: Living for the Life to Come

Fallen Condition Focus: Greed and Worry

- Why is Jesus' teaching interrupted in 13? What is the man's concern? (See HTB)
- How does Jesus respond to the man in 14-15? What command does He give?
- What is the meaning of Jesus' parable (16-21)? What is the difference between Jesus' command in 15 with the self-imposed commands of the rich man in 19?
- What do 20-21 tell us about the quality of life? (See Pss. 39:4-6 & James 1:17)
- In 22-30 what three reasons does Jesus give for why we shouldn't worry?
- What can we learn from the ravens and wildflowers? (See 1 Kings 10:4-7 & HTB)
- How does the command in 31 sum up Jesus' teaching so far?
- Why is heavenly treasure better than earthly treasure (33)? (Ecc. 2:1-11 & Lk 16:13)
- According to 34, what do the things we treasure say about what we love most?

Gospel Connection: Read Lk 3:22 & 12:32. Consider how the word "delights" in 12:32 is the same Greek word as "well-pleased" in 3:22. God speaks to us as His children! How does the good news of Rom. 8:15-17 help us fight against greed and worry?

TEXTUAL INTERSECTION: How does the text intersect with our lives?

- Research shows that Seattle is the most anxious metro in the US. Why do you think that is? How might this passage address the underlining issues involved?
- Are you following the command of Jesus (15) or the commands of the world (19)?
- How is greed manifested in you life? What do you worry about? Why?
- How does resting in the truth that all life is a gift protect against worry and greed?
- Which of the three reasons given by Jesus for us not to worry (22-30) is most encouraging to you? Why?
- What is the Kingdom (31) and what does it look like to seek the Kingdom first? (See Mark 1:14-15, Col. 1:13-14 & HTB)
- What things do you treasure? Are your priorities lined up with the priorities of God? Why or why not?

REPLICABLE QUESTIONS

Read Luke 12:13-34 and explore together what the passage reveals about:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1) The character and purposes of God? | 4) Our identity in Christ? |
| 2) The fallen human condition? | 5) Our obedience to Christ? |
| 3) The gospel of Jesus Christ? | 6) Our relationship to others |

TEXTUAL APPLICATION: "So, what now?"

Have each participant identify a personal take-away in light of this study. Is there . . .

- | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| • a command to obey? | • a beauty to behold? | • a mission to fulfill? |
| • a promise to claim? | • a truth to believe? | • an example to follow? |
| • a sin to repent of? | • a service to render? | • a person to tell? |